entrance of the Tirusoolam Railway Station parking lot. Thereafter the same level will be continued till it crosses the NH 45 at a point 20m away from Km. 17/6. The proposed lane crossing with NH 45 will have to be done by means of an underpass-subway.

The full details of the scheme are being worked out by the National Highway Department of the Tamil Nadu Government, since the State Public Works Department is, as per the present programme, to take up the scheme, involving as it does construction of road network and subway in the land owned by Railways, State Government and IAAI; IAAI may finance the construction cost of its part.

The estimated cost of the scheme is at present placed at Rs. 1 crore, as intimated by the National Highway Department of State Government.

Cancellation of trains on the eve of Bengal Bandh

37. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of trains which were cancelled on the eve of Bengal Bandh on the 14th September, 1988; and

(b) what is the estimated financial loss suffered by Railways as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) 468 number of Passenger trains and 1453 suburban trains were cancelled as a result of Bengal Bandh on 14th September, 1988.

(b) Train-wise statistics of earnings and loss are not maintained.

Foster parent scheme for girls' education in the country

38. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce foster parent scheme for girls' education in the country, on the pattern of Maharashtra; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) and (b) Since school education is looked after primarily by the State Governments, it is for them to initiate and implement such a scheme. The Government of India feels it is a good, innovative scheme for promoting girls' education. It has accordingly been commended to states in June, 1984 and March, 1988 for implementation.

Drop-outs in schools

39. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of children in the country in the age group of 6—11 years who are (i) studying in schools; (ii) not studying in schools as on 31st October, 1988;

(b) what is the number of drop-outs; and

(c) what steps have been taken so far to bring more children to schools?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) According to the projected population estimates based on 1981 census, the number of school going children in the age group 6—11 years (as on 1.3.1987) was 93784 lakhs. Against this the number of school going children at primary stage (classes I-V, as on 30.9.86) was 899.93 lakhs.

(b) The latest data available about drop-out at primary stage (Classes I-V) pertaining to the year 1983-84 indicates that the drop out at that stage was 50.26 per cent.

(c) The National Policy on Education, 1986 aims to achieve the objective of free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years by 1995. As enunciated in the policy document, States have been advised to adopt an array of meticulously formulated strategies based on micro-planning to ensure children retention in school and to achieve the target of Universalisation of Elementary Education. Centrally assisted schemes have been started to (i) provide essential facilities to primary schools through 'Operation Blackboard'; (ii) strengthening and reorganisation of the non-formal education programme to provide education to school dropouts, children from habitations without schools and girls who cannot attend whole day schools and working children; (iii) reorganise and restructure Teacher Education through establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training to increase teacher competence and provide academic support; (iv) new text books in accordance with the National Policy on Education, 1986 are being developed upto elementary level in a time bound programme by NCERT, and State Governments are expected to follow suit. Various incentive programmes like free supply of uniforms to girl students, free mid-day meals, free text books and attendance scholarships are being implemented by the State Governments/UT. Administrations.

Slow implementation of new education Policy due to financial constraints

40. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are faced with serious resource constraints and as a consequence thereof, the implementation of the New Education Policy has become tardy;

(b) whether for the same reason the pace of introduction of the new vocational courses in more schools has become slow; and

(c) if so, what steps are proposed to be taken by Government to improve matters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) to (c) There is a resource constraint and the implementation of schemes under NPE has been affected by it. The scheme of vocational education was formulated on the basis of targets fixed in the NPE. Unless financial resources commensurate with the targets fixed in NPE are made available, the progress in implementation of the scheme would necessarily slow down.

IPKF in Srilanka

41. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the role played by the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka in recent weeks;

(b) whether IPKF has been assisting the Government of Sri Lanka in the electoral process relating to the elections to the Provincial Councils contemplated in that country; and

(c) by when IPKF is expected to be withdrawn from Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) The IPKF is in Sri Lanka under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement for the implementation of the Agreement and to assure the safety and security of all communities in the North-Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. It continues to perform this task.

(b) It is not part of the IPKF's mandate to assist the Government of Sri Lanka in tasks which are specifically related to elections. However, in keeping with its mandate, the IPKF continues to provide appropriate security in the North-